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The Twenty-Fourth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Ways and Means

Testimony by
Hawaii State AFL-CIO
April 1, 2008

H.B. 2520 HD3, SD1 – RELATING TO CAREGIVERS

Chairman Baker and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO strongly supports the purpose and intent of H.B. 2520, HD3, which would amend the temporary disability insurance law to permit an eligible employee to collect up to four weeks of temporary disability insurance benefit payments to care for a family member with a qualifying disability.

Presently, H.B. 2520, HD3, SD1 does not create paid family leave, but rather a working group to address issues concerning support of family caregivers. We ask that you adopt H.B. 2520, HD3 which would create paid family leave and help thousands of families in Hawaii. No longer will a family be forced to choose between their paychecks and caring for their loved ones. Instead, this bill would provide up to four weeks of temporary disability insurance benefit payments, so that dreadful decision does not have to be made.

In fact, a U.S. Department of Labor survey found that between 1995 and 2000, the share of workers who needed family leave but could not afford to take it grew from 66 percent to nearly 78 percent. Additionally, nearly half of private-sector workers and 79 percent of low-income workers have no paid sick leave. Therefore, it is imperative that H.B. 2520, HD3 is passed. No one should be forced to choose between a paycheck and a sick family member.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
President

The Twenty-Fourth Legislature
Regular Session of 2008

THE SENATE
Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Senator Shan S. Tsutsui, Vice Chair

State Capitol, Conference Room 211
Tuesday, April 1, 2008; 10:15 a.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON H.B. 2520, HD3, SD1
RELATING TO CAREGIVERS**

The ILWU Local 142 supports the HD3 version of H.B. 2520, which would amend the Temporary Disability Insurance law to permit an eligible employee to collect up to four weeks of temporary disability insurance benefit payments to care for a family member with a qualifying disability.

Many workers in Hawaii today are called upon to be family caregivers. These individuals are forced to take time off from work (either unpaid leave or vacation) or even retire to provide care to family members who are disabled and/or elderly and need assistance with one more activities of daily living.

Allowing family caregivers to claim TDI benefits in order to provide care to family members serves multiple purposes. First, it allows for family caregivers to fulfill their obligations to family members without undue financial hardship. Second, it allows family members needing care to remain at home and not require institutionalization. Third, it promotes good will in the workplace that boosts morale and productivity and instills greater loyalty to the employer. All in all, a win-win situation.

The SD1 version of H.B. 2520 calls for a working group, which may bog down the process to achieve paid family leave.

The ILWU urges amendment of H.B. 2520 to its HD3 form. Thank you for the opportunity to share our views and concerns.